

and IDP's through a range of solutions, including improved management of operations. We must not demonstrate a lack of political commitment to solving refugee problems during the post-conflict phase, when the spotlight of the international media has moved away. We must more fully recognize the link between human displacement and international peace and security. History has shown that displacement is not only a consequence of conflicts; it can also cause conflict. Without human security, there can be no peace and stability. The U.S. must recognize the link between refugees and IDP's, on the one hand, and stability and the seeds of democracy on the other.

If we are to honor the courage of refugees and IDP's today, we must come together with the UNHCR, nongovernmental organizations, and other donor governments to actively pursue durable solutions. If we fail to do so, refugees and IDP's will remain in their miserable conditions—surviving on a handful of maize each day, living in immense boredom under windblown tents, and clinging to their hope amid memories of atrocities. On World Refugee Day and every other day, let us show the refugees and IDP's that we are with them. Having endured conflict, rape, abduction, trafficking, chronic hunger, squalor, and other unspeakable suffering, the courage of refugees and IDP's has been tested beyond what we can imagine. However, despite their courage, they remain vulnerable to the loss of hope. If we will allow them to lose hope, we allow them to lose courage. In our tribute to their indomitable courage, we must pledge never to let that happen. We must pledge to help them rebuild their lives today, to commit ourselves to long-term solutions, and to prevent the nightmare from reoccurring tomorrow.

AUTHORIZATION OF PARKINSON'S DISEASE RESEARCH EDUCATION AND CLINICAL CENTERS

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, Parkinson's disease is a serious health problem in the United States. Up to 1.5 million Americans have the disease and approximately 60,000 new cases are diagnosed each year nationwide. By 2010, an estimated 39,000 veterans who are age 85 and older will have this progressive neurological disorder. Treatments exist for Parkinson's, but medical research continues to improve treatments and to find a cure.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) took an important step in 2001 towards eradicating this disease by establishing Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Centers (PADRECCs). In addition to providing an unparalleled environment for researchers to see their results rapidly and directly applied to better patient care and shared with the medical and scientific community, these centers of excellence are the backbone that now enables the VA to provide excellent care to veterans with Parkinson's disease and to conduct research.

Through the PADRECCs and the National VA Parkinson's Disease Consortium—a network of nationally dispersed VA clinicians with expertise and/or interest in the fields of Parkin-

son's disease and related movement disorders—the VA is able to treat 42,000 veterans with Parkinson's disease.

Together the PADRECCs and the Consortium serve as a channel for collaboration and development in the areas of clinical care, scientific research and educational outreach. The collaborative efforts of the PADRECCs and Consortium provide veterans nationwide with integrated, expert medical care and access to the full spectrum of state-of-the-art diagnostic and therapeutic services to meet and exceed the standard of care.

In just a brief time since their inception, the six PADRECCs, which are based at the VA medical centers in Houston, West Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Portland-Seattle, Richmond and San Francisco, have made enormous contribution to Parkinson's disease care and research and training of health care professionals. The PADRECCs, including the VA hospitals in Albuquerque, Las Vegas, Loma Linda and Long Beach, Calif., Phoenix, San Diego and Tucson, which are affiliated with the Southwestern PADRECC located at the West Los Angeles VA Medical Center put VA at the forefront of the landmark clinical study to assess the effectiveness of surgical implantation of deep brain stimulators in reducing the symptoms of the disease.

The efforts of the VA PADRECCs are the model of innovation in the delivery of healthcare and research for chronic disease in the veteran population. The efforts of the PADRECCs deserve continued support.

Today, I am proud to introduce H.R. 2959 along with Mr. BAKER of Louisiana, Mr. BOEHLE of New York, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. MALONEY of New York, Mr. PICKERING of Mississippi, Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, Mr. KING of New York, and Mr. BLUMENAUER of Oregon, which would permanently authorize these six PADRECCs. The Disabled American Veterans and Parkinson's Action Network support permanently authorizing the PADRECCs.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill which will benefit tens of thousands of veterans and provide additional hope for all Americans who have Parkinson's disease.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
Washington, DC, June 17, 2005.

HON. LANE EVANS,
Ranking Member, House Veterans' Affairs Committee, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE EVANS: The Disabled American Veterans supports your draft bill that would authorize the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to establish six Parkinson's Disease Research, Education and Clinical Centers. Currently, VA medical centers treat over 40,000 Parkinson's disease patients every year.

These centers would conduct research covering basic biomedicine, rehabilitation, health services delivery, and clinical trials to assess the effectiveness of treatments such as surgical implantation of deep brain stimulators in reducing the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. Furthermore, the establishment of a consortium would allow VA to design a national network of VA clinicians with expertise and interest in the fields of Parkinson's disease and related movement disorders. The collaboration and development in the areas of clinical care, scientific research, and educational outreach would ensure specialized care will be embedded throughout the continuum of care provided by the VA health care system.

Thank you for your efforts to improve VA's specialized medical programs for serv-

ice connected disabled veterans, and thank you for your continued support of disabled veterans

Sincerely,

JOSEPH A. VIOLANTE,
National Legislative Director,
PARKINSON'S ACTION NETWORK,
Washington, DC, June 16, 2005.

House of Representatives, Veterans' Affairs Committee, Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE: On behalf of the Parkinson's Action Network (PAN), I would like to express support for legislation that will be introduced by Rep. Lane Evans shortly that provides for the establishment of the Parkinson's Disease Research Education and Clinical Centers (PADRECCs) in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

PAN is the unified education and advocacy voice of the Parkinson's community—more than one million Americans and their families. Through education and interaction with the Parkinson's community, scientists, lawmakers, opinion leaders, and the public, PAN leads the fight to ease the burden and find a cure. PAN increases awareness about Parkinson's disease and seeks federal support for Parkinson's research.

More than one million Americans have Parkinson's disease, with approximately 60,000 more diagnosed each year. As the disease progresses, patients are ultimately robbed of their ability to speak, walk, and perform many of the activities of daily life such as rising from a chair or rolling over in bed.

PADRECCs, as suggested by their name, are charged with conducting clinical and basic science research, administering national outreach and education programs, and providing state-of-the-art clinical care. These services, provided by the existing six PADRECCs, are vital not only to veterans, but to the entire community.

We firmly believe that patients, family members, and the general public should continue to have access to the invaluable services provided by the Parkinson's Disease Research, Education, and Clinical Centers. On this basis, PAN respectfully requests your support of this important legislation.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me or Mary Richards, PAN Director of Government Relations at (202) 638-4101.

Sincerely,

AMY L. COMSTOCK,
Executive Director.

CONGRATULATING COMMERCE BANK AND PRESIDENT IGNACIO URRABAZO ON THE OPENING OF THEIR NEW HEADQUARTERS

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Commerce Bank and President Ignacio Urrabazo on the opening of their new headquarters.

The headquarters will serve as the bank's primary location for the Laredo market. Commerce Bank is dedicated to providing convenient and superior services to its customers, even if that means traveling to a customers' place of business, or working far beyond a banker's traditional hours. Customers are known by their names, not by their account

numbers. This personal attention allows services to be tailored to the specific needs of their clients.

Commerce Bank President and CEO Ignacio Urrabazo sees the expansion as part of a larger commitment to help accommodate the outstanding growth that Laredo is currently experiencing. Mr. Urrabazo supports a community-oriented banking approach, and is active in minority causes. In 1999, he co-founded Minbanc, a nonprofit organization which works to support and promote the continued success of minority-owned banks across America. Mr. Urrabazo also endeavors to encourage minority businesses in the oil and gas industries.

I am honored to recognize the Commerce Bank and its President Ignacio Urrabazo on the opening of their new headquarters in Laredo. The outstanding work put forth by the Commerce Bank and President Urrabazo helps foster Laredo's continued economic growth and success.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to represent in the U.S. Congress thousands and thousands of refugees who live in St. Paul and the East Metro area. Whether they are originally from East Asia, East Africa, Eastern Europe or Central America, Minnesota is now their home and we call them our neighbors, our co-workers and our friends.

The resettlement of refugees in Minnesota is a success story. We should all celebrate the economic, social and cultural contributions made over the past generation who found peace, hope and opportunity in Minnesota. For the refugees and the communities that welcomed them it has not always been easy, but it has worked and worked to the benefit of our state.

Let me acknowledge the state, county and local government officials as well as the staff and educators from our school districts who work so hard to get families settled and transitioned to life in Minnesota. Let me also thank the resettlement agencies, community based non-profits, the faith community and the many families and volunteers. This collective effort has kept the refugee resettlement experience positive for both new Minnesotans as well as long-time residents.

While today is a celebration of sorts, I do not want anyone here to forget that suffering also continues for the more than 19 million people around the world fleeing persecution. The fact that more than nine million people are refugees and almost eight million more are internally displaced inside their own country due to violence—while millions more are stateless or seeking asylum.

Earlier this year I traveled to Eastern Chad to visit refugees in camps along the border of Sudan's Darfur region. The men, women and children I met had escaped the horrors of mass murder, mass rape, the burning of their villages, the killing of their animals and the poisoning of their wells. These exhausted souls were the survivors a genocide that continues to go on today—at this very moment.

Just as Minnesota has been a refuge—a place of safe, I want to publicly commend the people of Chad, a very, very poor nation with difficult geography, little water and few resources, for providing nearly a million Sudanese survivors of genocide a safe place. In normal times the people of Chad have very little, now they are sharing what they have with the Darfur refugees.

In Darfur, at least 180,000 people have been killed, starved to death or died of disease because of the intentional campaign of cleansing by the militias sponsored by the government of Sudan. Tens of thousand of women and girls have been raped and tortured in this campaign of terror.

Inside Sudan almost 2 million people are displaced—driven from their homes. Let me praise the work that Hugh Farmer and his staff at the American Refugee Committee are doing to keep people alive in Sudan—they are true heroes.

In the camp I visited in Chad the women were exhausted, the children were restless and the men were few—most had been killed. The struggles of daily life were unimaginable—little water, little food, almost no shelter and only very limited health services. The trauma of escaping genocide, surviving rape, watching one's family be murdered is almost too much to comprehend. Yet, these brave souls fight on to care for their children, hope for the future and work together to make the most of every day.

The people of the U.S. are helping—and helping a lot. More than \$1 billion in aid and emergency humanitarian relief has been provided to keep people alive. The courageous humanitarian workers who help deliver this relief take big risks and work tirelessly and they deserve both our praise and our prayers.

The crisis in Darfur is man-made, not some natural catastrophe. This is genocide—mass, planned murder of thousands. This is a horror. Ending the genocide in Darfur requires more than humanitarian aid—it requires the political will of nations—especially the United States willing to stand up and say these lives have value—this killing must be stopped. Every diplomatic, political, and if necessary—military tool—must be used to stop the killing.

This brings me to a disturbing and shameful recent episode. For all the good the U.S. has done with humanitarian relief for the victims of Darfur—our government also appears committed to working with the perpetrators of the genocide.

It was recently reported that in April of this year, a U.S. government jet owned by the CIA flew Major General Salah Abdullah Gosh—the head of Sudan's intelligence agency—to Washington for meetings with high level CIA officials. This was a reward for his government's work with the U.S. on the war on terrorism.

The government of Sudan is officially designated a "state sponsor of terrorism." The government of Sudan has participated in the murder and terrorizing of tens of thousands of their own citizens. The women and children I met in the refugee camps were victims of the Sudanese government's terror.

It is beyond my belief that a senior official complicit in this terror, this genocide could be jettied to Washington with our tax dollars to be commended for his "counter-terrorism" efforts. This episode is offensive, a slap in the face to every survivor of this horrible ethnic cleansing

and is truly a betrayal of the value we share as Americans. A likely perpetrator of genocide should never be the dinner guest of our government.

As a superpower, as a free people, as a people who will generously reach out anywhere in the world to help people in need, we cannot be on the side of the victims and the murders at the same time. The terror the people of Darfur are experiencing every day must be the same War on Terror our Nation is fighting—those people's lives have value and it is wrong for the CIA or anyone else in Washington to sell them out.

Let me say in conclusion, that I respect and admire the courage, the determination and amazing spirit of the refugees I have had the privilege to meet and know—both in Minnesota and in Chad.

The struggle and journey to find peace, security, hope and opportunity is real for refugees and anyone forced to flee their home. This is exactly what all human beings seek in life. It is my hope and it will be my determined commitment to myself, the families I work for in Washington, and the women and children I met from Darfur, that our government work tirelessly to make sure there are fewer refugees, fewer displaced persons and much, much more peace, security, hope and opportunity over the next twenty-five years.

This is truly the world I hope we can build together.

INTRODUCTION OF THE TRUE RE-INVESTMENT FOR AMTRAK INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 20, 2005

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to be joined by Mr. NADLER and Ms. SCHWARTZ to introduce the True Reinvestment for Amtrak Infrastructure in the 21st Century Act, otherwise known as TRAIN-21, which would provide the true federal commitment to Amtrak that has been missing for too long.

Amtrak is currently under attack by people who don't recognize the tremendous benefits generated by intercity rail in this country. Not the billions of dollars generated in commerce, nor the thousands of businesses along the Northeast Corridor whose employees are dependent on Amtrak, nor the national security value of having an additional mode of transportation, nor the benefits to our environment by taking cars off the road. However, 25 million people did recognize those benefits and rode Amtrak in 2004, which was the 2nd straight year of record ridership.

Amtrak is crucial for more than just the businessmen who ride its trains along the Northeast Corridor. It is just as crucial for commuters who unknowingly are dependent on Amtrak's survival. Were Amtrak to go bankrupt, nearly 100,000 New Jersey commuters would be stranded, because over three-quarters of New Jersey Transit trains ride on track owned and maintained by Amtrak. And Amtrak is just as crucial for the people in rural Montana or Colorado, who depend on the train as their link to the national transportation system.

There is no question that Amtrak has its share of problems. But there are two ways to